

Predicting & resolving non-completion in higher (online) education

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PREDICTING & RESOLVING NON-COMPLETION IN HIGHER (ONLINE) EDUCATION

BACKGROUND

The non-completion problem:

- A considerable number of students in higher (online) education do not complete a study course or program.
- Next to financial consequences, this also has consequences for students' confidence and reputation of educational institutions.

The present study:

- To our knowledge, there is not yet an overview of characteristics of interventions raising completion rates.
- In addition, to gain insight in the effectivity of these interventions, we need to know whether they are focusing on the most relevant factors related to non-completion.
- A literature review on modifiable predictors of (non-)completion (part a) and interventions to raise completion rates (part b) in higher (online) education was performed as a first step of a four-year design-based research project.

KEYWORDS

- Higher education
- Design-based research
- Non-completion
- Predictors
- Interventions
- Review

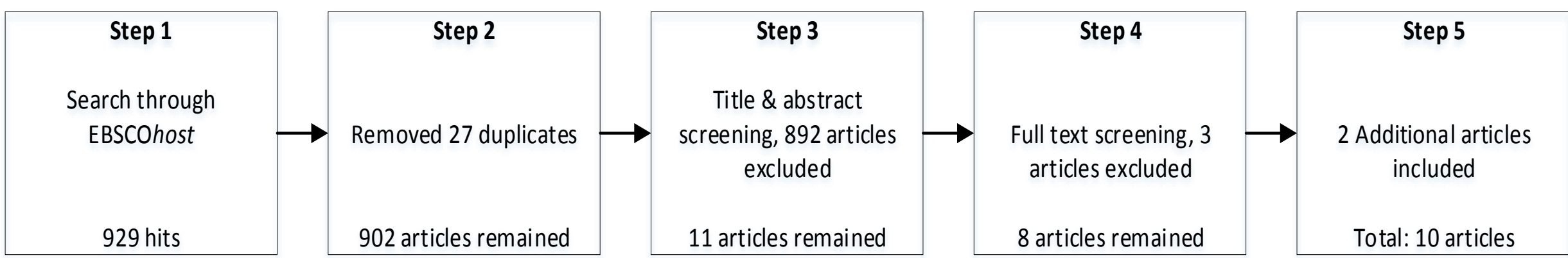


RESEARCH QUESTIONS

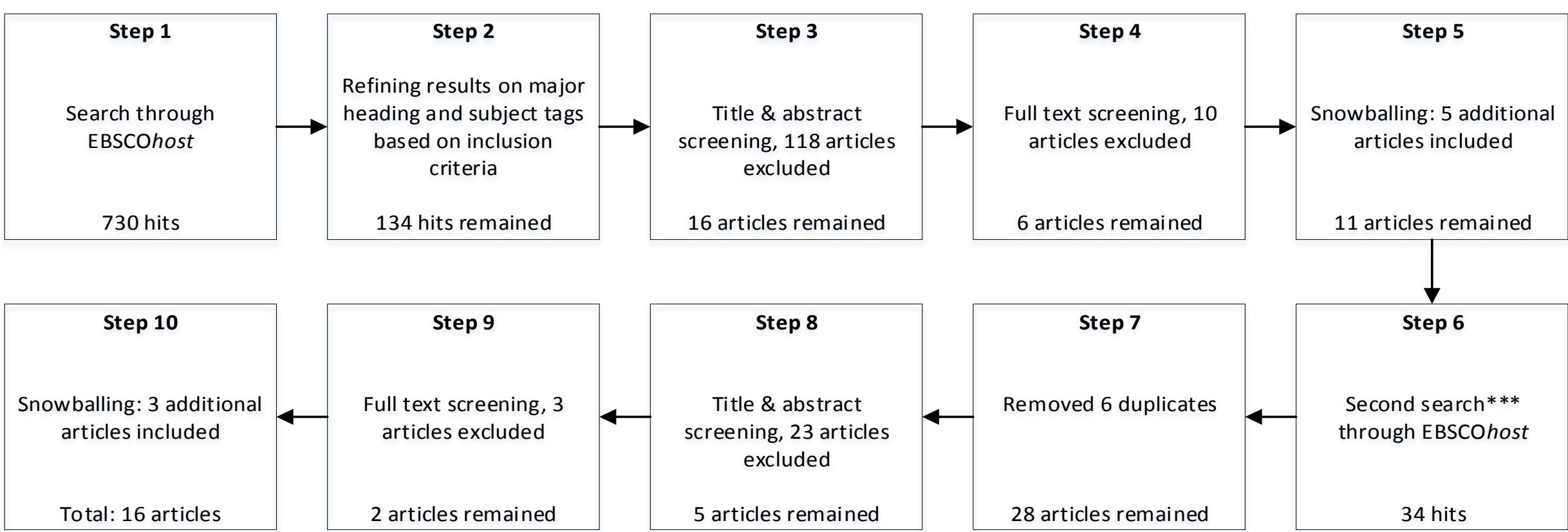
- A - Which modifiable variables are most strongly related to non-completion in higher (online) education?
- B - What are the key characteristics of effective and efficient interventions to raise completion rates in higher (online) education?

METHOD

Predictors

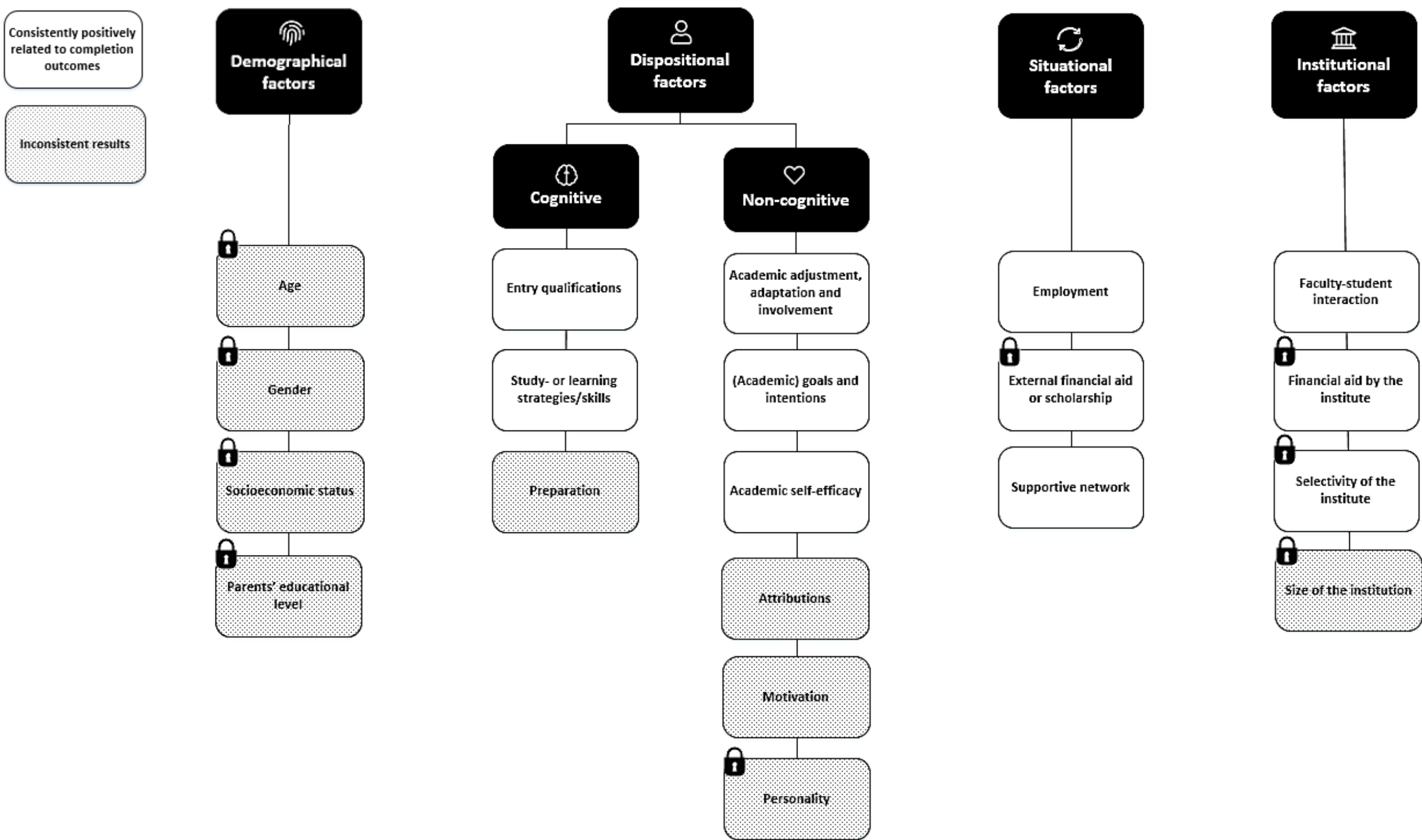


Interventions



RESULTS

Predictors



Interventions

Characteristics	Interventions				
	Coaching & Remedial teaching (K=6)	Peer mentoring (K=3)	Motivational contact (K=3)	Academic dismissal policies (K=3)	Interventions on instruction (K=1)
Impact on completion rates	Increasing	Increasing	Inconsistent	Decreasing	Increasing
Effect size (Cohen's d)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	0.07	Unknown
Effect (min. and max. difference between groups or cohorts)	6% 54%	10% 48%	2% 25%	7% 8%	7% 22%
Duration (min. to max.)	One session One year	One semester One year	One course One semester	One year	One course One semester
Mode of intervention (online, face-to-face or blended)	Face-to-face Online	Blended Online	Online	Blended Online	Online
Educational context (online or face-to-face educational context)	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Face-to-face Online	Face-to-face	Online
Target factor(s)*	Information Motivation	Motivation Information	Motivation	Information Motivation	Motivation

* Target factors are based on the categories of the part a of this literature review.
** K is the number of intervention studies included in the corresponding category.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions:

- Modifiable consistent predictors of non-completion in higher (online) education are study- or learning strategies, academic self-efficacy, (academic) goals and intentions, institutional or college adjustment, employment, supportive network and faculty-student interaction.
- Interventions raising completion rates in higher (online) education significantly are coaching or remedial teaching and peer mentoring.
- Interventions raising completion rates significantly focus on dispositional cognitive and non-cognitive, and situational factors.

Future directions:

- More systematic and aligned (i.e., to research on predictors) research on interventions is needed, which advocates for a design-based research approach.
- More scientific publications on interventions to raise completion rates are needed, in order to build a knowledge base on how to increase completion rates in higher (online) education.
- Especially for interventions prior to student enrolment.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS

